

Lithgow Playground

25/04/07

Attendees :

Anthony "Shrek" Barker & Family - Pajero
Siva Moodley & Family- Challenger
Steve Rose – Patrol
Alistair Organ – Landcruiser
Ian Woolley – Landcruiser
Mike – Landcruiser Ute
Frank Hanlon – Hilux
Bruce – Troopie

Ironically the Alarm wet off at 5.30am with "Rain drops keep falling on my head" playing. I jumped on the net for an update on the weather and it seemed to be in our favor so a text message went out that it was all systems go. After linking up with Siva & Co we made our way to Lithgow Macca's where everyone was waiting.

Steve Rose had already tested out a few tracks on the way up and looking at the mud plastered on the side of the car and the drizzle outside it was obvious that we were going to have a harder day than first planned.

We set off through Lithgow and entered the state forest at the Lithgow end, we stopped to air down just before the black stuff turned into mud. We gathered around and after a quick brief we headed off. Within 200 Mtrs we arrived at the first track.

At this point we split up into 2 groups, the guys who wanted to try and conquer and the guys who wanted to save this track to a dryer day. I lead the onlookers around to the top of the hill while the rest made there way to the bottom. Steve's Tonka toy walked up as if it was a highway.... Then the fun started. Bruce in the Troopie was next, with wheels in the air, wheels spinning, lockers going on & off & lots of talking & guiding he made it to the top. Mike was next in the Landcruiser ute and after seeing & learning from Bruce's attempt made it look easy. Ian Woolley was next and did well for a car without Lockers but did require a bit of assistance in the way of a snatch strap much to Mike's joy. Alistair was last and in impressed all with the new Truck and made it unassisted to the top.

From there we made our way to the power lines near the Zigzag railway entrance. We made our way to the beginning and lined up for the challenge. I was first in line but Steve somehow pushed in twice before I even got started. This track has 4-5 huge wombat holes that are at diagonals to each other and would cross up the best of cars (except the Tonka toy). In the time it took all of use to have 1 go each, Steve had done it about 5 times.

We made our way towards the Lost city rd Via Slippery Rock, On the way we had to navigate around a few mud puddles etc when the call came over the radio "I'm stuck" It turned out the Landcruiser ute wasn't as high as Mike thought and he was stuck in the middle of a long mud puddle. Much to Ian's delight he had the pleasure of repaying the Snatch recovery. "1 all" was the comment that came over the radio, Once we got to Slippery rock it was obvious that no standard 4wd would make it in the wet, so the sensible ones made our way back around the long way, meanwhile Steve showed the others the how it should be done and they followed him to the top. From here we cut across to the top of Bobs hill where we navigated our way Down and up again with no problems. We followed the track until we got to one of the main intersections and decided the hunger pains were too much and we pulled over for a break.

After lunch we headed down towards a ridge that would take us to different view of the lost city, after a while we ended up on a ridge to the right of the normal ridge that is visited. The rain managed to stop long enough for us to have a good look around.

From here we tried a side track that seemed to go down into the valley but unfortunately it turned into a dead end.

We headed back to place where we had lunch and headed in a different direction. Soon we ended up at the base of a huge hill with a huge mud pit at the base.

Steve has tackled this hill many times before but in the dry. Before anyone could say “are you going to have a go?” he was off. At first it looked like the Tonka toy had met its match, there was mud flying everywhere, after a lot of effort it finally made it up & out of the mud and started a slow and slippery drive up the hill. Not wanting to be left out Bruce set off to prove what a Nissan could do, a Toyota could do the same. To the Toyota’s credit it made it out of the mud hole easily but then it came to the slippery hill. All 4 tyres were spinning but it was not going anywhere, Next thing you know there was a Troopie leaning on a 45 degree angle sideways on a 45degree angle hill with a lot of slippery mud. With a lot of clever planning no recovery was required and the Troopie made it under its own steam. I was informed by the rescue team that there was a smell coming from the cabin of the Troopie afterwards and the knuckles were white and firmly gripped on the steering wheel.

Deciding this was not a good idea to try and navigate that hill any more we went the long way around and tried a few side tracks, With time getting away we decided to head home, After a slow run home because of the mud on the roads we made it to the Zig zag railway and aired up.